565 includes hereditary specialization, hierarchy, repulsion between the
564 different groups, and refusal to associate with people of a different caste. These principles are partly in force among the Tuareg, whose type of social organization borrows from the two systems.

/150/ Furthermore, there are great analogies between the two systems. This sort of aristocratic organization is well suited to nomadic life, in opposition to democratic organization which is more commonly found among sedentary groups.

171 According to some authors, the caste system is specifically Hindu; it only existed in its pure state in India and to a lesser de-
564 gree in ancient Egypt. (1) Thus we are hardly surprised to find this

1. Deniker, Les races et les peuples de la terre /The Races and Peoples of the World/, p. 489.

organization among the Tuareg who, culturally, belong to the same cycle of civilization.

182 The crystallization of that organization among this people,
564 who on the whole possess quite high intellectual qualities, as well as the material crystallization, can only be explained by the isolation in which it was confined as a result of circumstances where climate has certainly played a large role.

565 The Tuareg are divided into suzerains (Imochar) of a specifically warlike nature, vassals (Imrad) most commonly shepherds, religious men (Inislimen), and serfs (Iklan). Other elements from different origins are enfeoffed to them, such as the Issekkemâren, the Iboroliten, and the Enaden.

174 The present hierarchy obviously results from a series of wars and civil conflicts. In the fight for life each person endeavored to
182 get his share, and as always this was at the expense of the weaker.
565 Tribes achieved a predominance which they were not always able

174 to maintain, which others seized from them, and suzerains became
182 vassals. But in spite of these contingencies of war, the Tuareg
565 attach great importance to blood origins and always respect high-
[554 727] born people, even though they may be their vanquished /adversaries/.

Thus, at the present time, the nobles of the Ahaggar and the
554 Ajjer may be seen to seek alliances with women of the fallen fraction
565 of the Imenan Sultans. This adds to the luster of their high origin
581 a certain character of religious nobility, which is much appreciated among Moslems.

000 Monogamy and matriarchy. -- To understand Tuareg society, one must remember two important facts, facts which are, moreover, not completely independent of each other, monogamy and matriarchy.

/151/ While the Tuareg are Moslems and have polygamous
174 peoples as neighbors, it is astonishing to note that they practice
562 monogamy. This is an evident indication that women occupy an
[595] important place in their society, in no way comparable to what they occupy among the Arabs. This was very striking to the first travelers who thought they saw traces of an ancient Christianity in the persistence of monogamy. This argument might be held if we did not know, on the other hand, that the social organization of the Tuareg rests on matriarchy, an ancient custom much earlier than the Christian era, which explains monogamy and the particularly high position of women.

Gautier writes on this subject: "It may be said that the Tuareg practice chivalrous gallantry; the expression is inadequate only because of the association it evokes. Our chivalry has a Christian origin; the respect of the Tuareg for women has much deeper and more remote reasons. It goes back to matriarchy, which is earlier than the notion of the state and even that of the family. It is a living witness of completely primordial humanity, a sentiment, if I may say so, of the quaternary age." (1)

1. La conquête du Sahara /The Conquest of the Sahara/, p. 33.

174 in the Sudan, the Sanhadja-Nounou, was governed by a woman named Bikoun-Kabi, whom the Sonrhaï /Songhai/ emperor Sonni-Ali had to conquer in order to seize her territory. Es-Sadi, author of the Tarik-es-Soudan, reports several facts of this kind.

The Islamization of the Berber tribes certainly had a part in the elimination of the custom. Women no longer play any official [562] political role in our times. But they have made themselves the guardians of ancestral customs and folklore, and their authority is [626] so strong that one /154/ can only quote the answer of a Tuareg to an Arab who admonished him upon the subject of Tuareg mores: "No one would dare do otherwise, for then no woman would look at us any longer."

162 The persistence of monogamy among the Tuareg is also favored 182 by the considerable excess of men found among them, an exceptional 595 fact and contrary to what we observe in other human groups.

The aménokal. -- Aménokal means in Tamashek "possessor of 643 the country" (from am, possessive prefix, and akal, "country"). [192] In the Ahaggar this title is conferred only upon the supreme chief reigning over a whole of noble, vassal, or assimilated tribes. [184] In Sudanese tribes, on the other hand, it may be applied to heads of fractions, indeed even to mere camp chiefs.

The aménokal is designated according to hereditary rules deriving from the matriarchal system. He is always chosen, not only in the same tribe, but in the same line which one could compare to the clan. His domination, to be effective, must be sanctioned by the approval of the nobles to whom are joined for the occasion the chiefs of vassal tribes. For the latter, approval involves an agreement to pay tribute later.

Sometimes there are several pretenders to the title; perhaps a descendant of a formerly ousted family asserts his rights, or perhaps the natural heir is recognized incapable of leadership. This brings about a competition where hereditary rules are not always respected.

233 721 The Tuareg are herders. It does not seem that they ever knew any other stage of civilization, except hunting which is the prelude to animal husbandry. But even by judicious use of pasturage they cannot own a great number of domestic animals, and in the last analysis herding falls into the background in their means of existence. Since the country could not feed them, they had to look elsewhere for what they lacked. They therefore looked to their sabers for the rest.

181 721 Like the majority of herders, the perpetually famished Tuareg are born warriors, because from time immemorial they have had to dispute the rich lands with the sedentary peoples. Their free life has made them independent and anarchistic. The wealth /215/ of others has not inspired any respect in them, but rather a sentiment of envy which no moral rule has been able to check. Pillage has thus been raised to the state of an institution, and the Tuareg have become masters of the trade.

721 [182] The raid, now a continual state of war with their neighbors, may be considered the principal social achievement of the Tuareg. And thus we may see the important role that the Ahaggar Mountains play; they are not only a refuge for life, but also a refuge for brigands who want to shelter themselves from the possible investigations of their victims.

579 627 The raid is organized, even ordered, pillage. It is an institution with its rules which the antagonists respect. Its simplest form is taking the neighbor's herds; once the deed is done, the raider makes a deal with him and compromises by giving him back a certain number of animals so that he can subsist, keeping for himself what is judged to be the surplus. The complicated form occurs when the attacked man defends himself or tries to take back his property. That can lead to pitched battles and, as a consequence, dead men. From that time on, it is fratricidal war which demands blood and which creates eternal hatred.

That was what the life of the Ahaggar Tuareg was before the French occupation.

In addition, they robbed caravans who happened into their country, hatefully ransoming the voyagers. Sometimes they went to empty the granaries of the sedentary people of the oases or the Sudanese villages, capturing Negroes and Negresses to sett as slaves.

When peace reigned in their country, they willingly organized /218/ caravans to go to the Tidikelt or Touat oases and bring back dates, or else to the Sudan to get supplies of millet. They also made themselves the protectors of caravans crossing their country, naturally making the caravaneer pay a consistently high duty in merchandise.

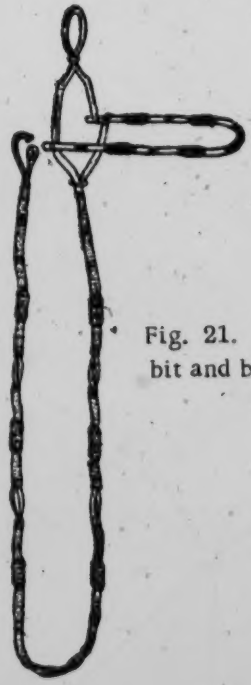


Fig. 21. Camel bit and bridle.

The Ahaggar has famous salt mines in the region called Amadror which lies to the east of the Tafedest massif in a large depression. They are an appreciable resource for the Ihaggaren, but manpower is needed to exploit them. Then, transportation and circulation demand a general state of peace in which the numerous herds of pack camels can be protected from possible surprise attacks and raids. That is why the Amadror salt deposits remained unexploited for a long time before the French occupation, because of the state of perpetual war existing between Ahaggar Tuareg and Tassili Tuareg.

312 The question of water is fundamental in the formation of the
[361 camp, both for the choice of its location and for the number of tents
182] to be included.

Water is obviously a problem for all life; it plays a role in the location of our small European villages, but this role is still greater in desert countries where water is quite rare. The existence of watering places is not only necessary for human life but also for the life of the domestic animals.

137 To this primordial condition of the existence of a watering
182 place must be added the condition of pasture for the domestic
312 animals. Therefore, we see that the establishment of a camp among
361 the Ihaggaren is conditioned by two main factors whose character may vary in time, depending on the seasons and the abundance or scarcity of rain. But in the last analysis the pasture needs take precedence, for, generally speaking, pasture is even rarer than
137 water, since it can sometimes be completely lacking. This need
182 for pasture forces tribes to split up and camps to be dispersed in
361 order to exploit it rationally. The situation is such that there are
621 rarely more than five or six tents in each group. Only the amenokal's
[643] camp may number as many as 15 or 20 tents, but this is quite exceptional, involving the question of prestige and social order at the same time. Indeed, the amenokal supports a numerous family, his caliphs, his servants, etc. But this grouping around the chief is quite artificial, and the flocks which the people own are not with them but are /222/ spread out in the mountains, kept by Imrad or servants.

361 The camp is always established rather far from the watering
312 places, for it is preferable to be closer to the pastures. It is often five or six kilometers from water. The animals go there to drink every two or three days, and the people use the occasion to get
[482 their water supply, which will be carried in waterskins on their backs
492] or under the stomach of the asses. Tuareg, moreover, do not like
361 to settle near a watering place, for it is always a stopping point for
609 transients, and they avoid making their presence known to strangers.

342 crosspiece forming the central frame; four vertical stakes are placed two by two on each side of the tent.

[71] This model used to be much more widespread in the Ahaggar, and it seems to be an older form, for the model presently used must have been taken from the Ioullimmiden. All the old people recall having seen it used in their youth in all camps on an equal basis with the vertical stake form.

The tent with arches, the upper part of which forms a kind of dome, is better able to withstand the rains than the other. If [182] [132] that was its raison d'être, we may understand why it disappeared with the gradual drying out of the Sahara. This disappearance may also have been caused by the difficulty of procuring large roots to make the arches.

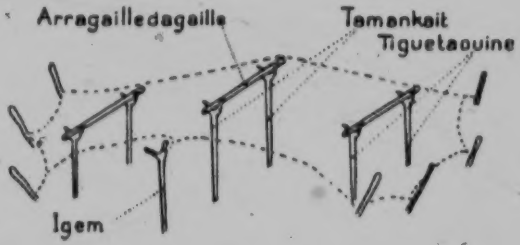


Fig. 25. Tent used by the Kel Rela. During the rainy season, the two central stakes are replaced by a single stake holding up a ridge tile.

[386] The awning is always covered with a coat of red ocher which protects it from the heat of the sun and from the rain.

[285] In both models, the tent always includes a sort of detachable closing made of a long mat (asaber) woven from the stems of graminaceae. It is unrolled inside around the stakes to close the tent completely. High up in the mountains the Tuareg reduce the inside area of the tent in order to keep warmer, and provide the part opposite /225/ the opening with a little stone wall which effectively protects them from the cold. The door is always opened toward the south.

264 [415] The Tuareg use spoons. The use of this implement is peculiar to them, for their Arab or Negro neighbors eat with their hands. The custom must be related to the wearing of the veil, which they do not take off to eat and which prevents them from putting their [182 291] hands full of food to their mouths. They carry food to their mouths while slightly holding up the ends of their veils.

[271] 272 For beverages they drink only water, whether it is clean or polluted, and milk.

For half a century they have had the habit of drinking green tea in the Arab manner; they aromatize it with mint or some perfumed plants of the Ahaggar, /238/ chih (Artemisia herba alba) in particular. Coffee, which was formerly much used by them, is now [757 178] taken mainly as a medication to calm violent coughs or stomach aches.

276 If we now seek consumer goods taken as stimulants or narcotics, we see that the Tuareg know only tobacco, which they chew or take as snuff.

Smoking is not one of their customs. The young men who are [177] in contact with the French like to beg a cigarette, but it is simply in the spirit of imitation.

Duveyrier, however, has said that the Tuareg smoke. Was this, 114 perhaps, the fashion among the Tuareg who visited Ghat? Before 276 him Barth wrote that all riverain people living along the Niger loved to smoke. "It is very seldom that they leave their pretty little clay pipes, and all the Rouma, like the Tuareg, cover their mouths when smoking, so that all one sees is a pipe bowl coming out of the shawl which covers the face." (1)

1. Voyage en Afrique,
vol. IV, p. 137.

/250/ introduced before or after the Christian era, it is nonetheless true that the ancestors of the Tuareg must have introduced it.

At the present time, human life in the Sahara, which is already of little consequence, would be reduced to zero without the camel. This is a fundamental fact which has been amply demonstrated and which it is useless to dwell on. Th. Monod, who dedicated one of his works "To the camel and the goat, the vehicle and the container, the two sole conquerors of the Sahara, " (1)

1. Méharées/ Meharis/.

has not only been literary and witty, he has put the truth in a few words. Without the camel, no relation would be possible between the oases, no relation between North Africa and intertropical Africa.

One may therefore easily understand that the animal plays a large part in the life of the Saharian Tuareg, and that the latter make a great effort to raise camels. They have always endeavored to own many camels, and at the present time their livestock has increased to more than 10, 000 head.

Although the camel has adapted perfectly to the Saharian pastures and terrain, it is nonetheless true that the aridity is such that he has difficulty keeping in good condition, and that a slightly prolonged march has to be compensated for by a rest period lasting twice as long as the period during which he was tired out. That is why the Ihaggaren nomadize with their camels on the borders of the Sahara in the steppe where there are acacias and graminaceae.

Ahaggar breeding is very famous. It furnishes animals which are resistant, very frugal eaters, capable of braving mountain rocks or marching for weeks on end over the granite regoliths of the Tanezrouft, something the Sudanese -bred camels could not do.

The Tuareg select the animals when they are very young, destining them either for saddle camels or for pack camels. The meharis are castrated and undergo special training. In speaking of

177 In the last few years a number of notables, including the
492 aménokal, travel on horseback, but only when they travel in the
643 Lower Ahaggar which is furrowed by wide valleys, allowing them
133 to avoid rocks.

101 The Ihaggaren never travel on zebus and never use them for
492 transportation. In the Sudan, however, this animal is used as a saddle animal and a beast of burden.

/321/

Chapter 2

War and Raiding

721 The Tuareg distinguish two kinds of warring expeditions: war declared between fractions or peoples, which they call annemensi or amdjer; and raids, edjen or egen, which aim to pillage a camp or a herd by surprise.

Although war was rather rare, raids were, on the contrary, quite frequent. They were caused by the atavistic taste of the Tuareg for this sort of expedition. For the occasion they gathered together the most disparate elements, all moved by the same spirit of adventure and battle.

182 When an expedition against a camp was decided upon, those
221 present tried to gather the suitable number of men. They were
361 most frequent in summer, for, since the camps were forced to
721 spread out in the pastures, it was easier to surprise them.

War, on the other hand, was waged in winter, when the caravans had returned and the provisions necessary for the life of the tribe had been assured for the long months; this relieved the warriors of any material preoccupation about the lot of their families.

727 Each man had to procure arms for himself, and if he did not
426 own his own mehari, he found someone to lend him one; in case
714

2:Briggs E-4, 5 (ca. 1956) 1958
MS25 Tuareg MS25
Hoggar

233 across much of the land and concentrated
[137] along dry river bottoms, and the small patches of thick, lush, emerald green grass that flourish briefly in hollows here and there following rainstorms. Pasturage is always either very sparse or very scattered in the Ahaggar and so the nomadic inhabitants of the area must move often, for the supply in the immediate neighborhood of a camp is quickly exhausted.
[312] To make life still more difficult, water points are often few and far between as we already know, and it is not unusual to find good pasturage so far from any water that it cannot be used for more than a day or two, if at all. This combination of circumstances has
233 made it necessary for the Ahaggar Tuareg
221 to break up into small and highly mobile camp units composed of fractions of clans, or even single families, and each of these units must move at intervals of usually somewhere between a week and a month and often over considerable distances, although always within the territorial limits of the tribe (fig. 36).

As soon as a camp or constellation of neighboring camps is established in a new location, the head men first set up the daily grazing routine of the flocks and then set out at once to scout far and wide in search of the next pasture to be used and the next camp sites that their families will occupy. And so it goes the year around, and so the Tuareg of the Ahaggar are highly mobile nomads by force of circumstances, for they cannot survive otherwise in the region which they have made their own.

565 It is in the compelling circumstances of their environment that we find the roots of
233 the class system of the Ahaggar Tuareg, for,
463 quite apart from the question of mobility,
182 such conditions can be met successfully only by a well conceived and firmly established division of labor. In the Ahaggar it is the nobles of a tribe and the headmen of the vassal clans who ride out in search of new pastures and at the same time act as military scouts, always on the watch for enemy raiders as

[423] *The fundamental difference between the two systems lies in the fact that the basis of land tenure among the Tuareg is not that of the *beneficium* while personal allegiance is not based on the concept of the *comitatus*. The true feudal system of medieval Europe was based on the conferring of privilege by an absolute ruler (or one of his vassals) on a less

565 well as for potential victims, alien camps or
233 caravans which they can raid themselves. The
463 vassals in their turn are responsible for the daily management and immediate protection of the flocks and herds, and also constitute an armed reserve that can be called up quickly in case a battle becomes imminent or the opportunity for a major raid presents itself. The
[567] slaves take care of the domestic service and household chores of the camps while their boys go out as shepherds to the flocks.

Thus it is clear that the Tuareg class system
565 is a necessity of pastoral life in the Ahaggar;
642 for no pastoral community can survive there without nomadizing, and no community of
[182] nomads can survive without a rigidly formalized division of labor and authority similar to that embodied in the class system of the Tuareg. It now becomes clear also that the seemingly paradoxical combination, within the social framework, of rigidity during the period of a single adult lifetime and a relative fluidity over slightly longer periods still so short as to span often no more than a couple of generations and sometimes less, is not in fact a paradox at all. It merely reflects in simple functional terms the fact that extreme conditions call for an extreme response, that the framework within which the allocation of authority is made at various levels in the communal structure must be very firmly established but must also allow considerable freedom periodically in the choice of those who are to occupy critical positions of decision and command so as to avoid the danger of having such positions filled automatically by persons unfit to occupy them, a danger that could well be quickly fatal to the whole community.

And finally we see that Tuareg government really has nothing essential in common with the feudal system of mediæval Europe to which it has so often been confusingly compared.[9] In the last analysis authority resides in the vassals, for they can make and at least
[643] in theory break the mightiest of all the nobles, the Amenokal himself, and they can do all this by peaceful means, at least again in theory.

powerful neighbor in exchange for some specified kind of continuing or periodic service. Among the Tuareg the relationship between "noble" and "vassal" looks much the same at first glance, but this is an optical illusion, a case of merely superficial resemblance.

721 simple, and this activity can be divided into two main types according to the chief object in view. Raiding for booty was practised irregularly but fairly often, especially in times of hardship or in connection with intertribal feuds. Sneak attacks by small bands who lifted livestock and then promptly fled with it were typical. Slave raiding was practised on a fairly regular basis. In the nomad camps of the
727 Ahaggar the number of Negro domestic servants is usually about equal to the number of Tuareg present, and this labor force used to be replenished when necessary by raids on Negro villages in the desert fringe of the Sudan and occasionally even on Tuareg camps in the Aïr, Tamesna and Adrar n Ifoghas regions. The present writer knows a mulatto freedwoman who was taken in this way from the Aïr some 40 years ago, and has long been happily settled at Tamanrasset; and she is by no means an exception. Thus raiding, the fourth corner post of Tuareg economy in the Ahaggar, was primarily a mechanism designed to keep the supply of livestock, both animal and human, at a satisfactory level in an area where the environment caused a steady normal decrease in the local supply.

177 **Economic Summary.** We have seen that pastoralism was the central column and crop
182 shares, trading, protection and raiding the four corner posts of the economic structure of the Ahaggar Tuareg. With the coming of European domination the last two pillars were kicked away, the third buckled and bent to a mere fraction of its former height, and the roof fell in along three sides and part of the fourth. The Ahaggar Tuareg presumably never lived a life of ease—no pastoralist can in such a rigorous environment—but their greatest perils used to be those of warfare. These dangers have been removed completely by the new European rulers of the area, and yet the Tuareg of the Ahaggar as a whole are undoubtedly in worse economic shape today than they have ever been before. Their old
182 culture, whatever some may think of it on the basis of modern European standards, was remarkably well adapted to conditions in their chosen homeland. The destruction of two of its five main supports and the progressive weakening of a third have thrown their economic structure so seriously out of balance that the whole edifice is obviously doomed,

182 and the Tuareg of the Ahaggar as a nation, too stubborn to adapt themselves to any way of life other than their own, have at last signed their name to the ever-lengthening list of vanishing peoples.

342 Shelter. The typical dwelling of the Ahaggar Tuareg is a leather tent, made preferably of the skins of goats although sometimes those of sheep or even calves are used (fig. 36). A tent of mouflon skins is considered the height of luxury and elegance, but it is almost impossible to come by enough of them to make such a tent nowadays. The prepared skins are 281 very soft and have a pleasing dull red brick 342 color which is produced by rubbing them on both sides with a mixture of red ocherous clay and dried camel dung. After being prepared and cut down to rectangular form, they are sewed together with fine strips of leather. Anywhere from 30 to as many as 150 may be used to make a single tent, but the first number is not far below the average. A finished tent of ordinary size weighs about 50 pounds more or less.

342 Tents are mounted on wooden frames of various closely similar types, the most common of which consists of three elements, each composed of two uprights with a horizontal member laid across their tops. The highest element is set in the middle with one upright in front and the other in the back, and the two remaining elements are set up parallel to it, one on either side. The tent covering is then stretched over this framework, with its back and sides pegged down and the front left open, usually facing south. In good weather the overhanging front of the roof is stretched out horizontally to form an awning held in place by three supplementary posts, one in the middle and another at each end. The average tent is 6 to 10 feet deep from front to back, 10 to 15 feet wide and 4 to 5 feet high in the middle, with the roof sloping away very gently on both sides and toward the back wall. The structure is completed by [285] long strips of stiff, yellow matting made of 351 thin reeds, roughly 3 feet wide and up to 20 feet long more or less, with simple geometric designs in black or reddish brown leather ribbon woven into them. These strips are set on edge around the inside of the tent so as to make an inner wall at the back and sides,

It is probably because of this custom that the Tuareg 182 291 302
shaves his mustache and he finds it strange that we wear them.
On the other hand, he wears a full beard.

Chapter XIX

The Woman's Saddle

I think it well to give below the following description of 492
the very unusual mehari saddle of Tuareg women.

I had the opportunity to see one, of which I was able to get a sketch (see the accompanying illustration). /40/

It seems that many other saddles are handsomer, with painted wood, and they say that the beautiful Dassine suffered considerable distress when she learned that a beautiful saddle belonging to her had been plundered by one of the insurrectionists at the beginning of our establishment in the /Saharah? Oases.

The woman's saddle, which somewhat resembles a sedan chair, is placed over the hump of the mehari without touching it. It consists of the following essential parts: a rectangular seat of netted strands, supported by four uprights to which are fastened four cushions with holes in the center which rest, two on each side, on the flanks of the mehari. These cushions A are called "afelledoud" ⵎⵎ ⵍⵍ ⵊⵍ , plural "ifelledad" ⵉⵎⵎ ⵍⵍ ⵊⵍ .

The uprights are fastened to each other by two transverse bars on each side.

A chain of iron links B called "imetredj" ⵉⵎⵜⵔⴷⵊ goes around the saddle and passes through the ring of the girth C, which is called "ahif"

Onto the upright with the rear cushion, which is hidden in the picture, is attached an embroidered ornament which has hanging from it strands of wool or colored leather. This ornament D is called "tegarsim"

7:Nicolaisen 4-5 (1951-1962) 1963 MS25 Tuareg MS25

never manufactured by noble women, but noble Tuareg obtain this footwear from vassals, or have them made by their slaves. Lhote states that *imerkeden* sandals in the past were more common among the noble Tuareg of Ahaggar (Lhote 1952a, p. 605). *Imerkeden* sandals are very common in Tasilé-n-Ajjer. They are said to be known among the *Kel Ewey* Tuareg under the name *tadakat*. The *Kel Ferwan* Tuareg say that they have a related type, but this I have never seen. The *Kel Ferwan* Tuareg almost exclusively wear sandals of *takalmi* type.

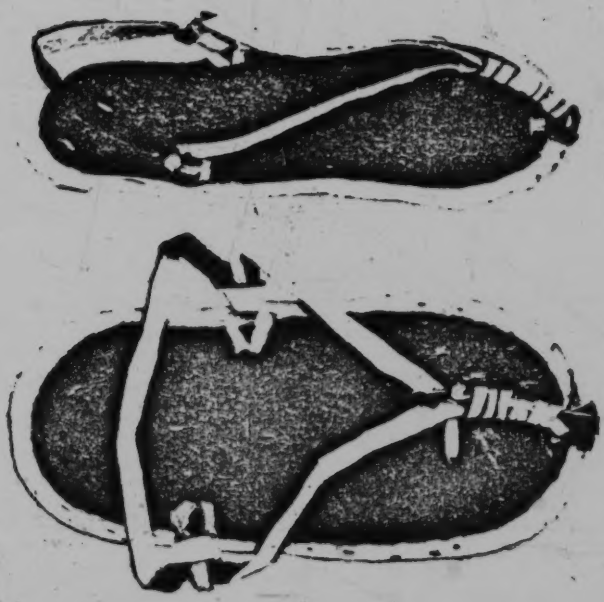
A third main type of sandals is that known to most Tuareg as *tagliezez*. Like other sandal types it is described in detail by Lhote in his study on Tuareg sandals (Lhote 1950d, p. 512–533). Sandals of this type are generally made from one piece of hide or leather which is bent up over the toes. The system of attachment consists of a leather strap attached to the bent-up flap of the sole and passing around the heel through two loops at the back of the sandal. These sandals are extremely common all over the steppes and savannahs of the south, and in Ayr they are used among the *Kel Ewey* and other Tuareg who make them from untanned hide of oxen. In Northern Tuareg country this sandal type is rare and generally not used by pastoral Tuareg who do not manufacture them. However, a pair of sandals resembling this type was brought from Ahaggar to the National Museum of Copenhagen by Olufsen (museum number G 18) (Fig. 243). Sandals of *tagliezez* type are nowadays used by many sedentary people of Tamanrasset in Ahaggar. They are esteemed by Europeans and by Tuareg and Arabs of the camel corps in Northern Tuareg country. But the sandals worn by the last-mentioned people are manufactured by professional craftsmen. The sandals illustrated Fig. 244 were bought at the market of Agadez, but derive from the south – from Sokoto it is said. I have noted their name as *alweroga*. – The type of sandal here called *tagliezez* is known to the Ahaggar Tuareg as *téfridlit* (pl. *tifridlin*) (cf. Foucauld 1951–52, I, p. 304).

A fourth type of sandal is described by Lhote under the name of *éfekil* (pl. *ifekilen*). It is made of a single piece of untanned hide which is treated as described above for the *takalmi* type, and Lhote thinks that this type of sandal, which is common in the south among poor people, is the most primitive type. Lhote believes that the same type occurs also in Ahaggar because the word *éfekil* is mentioned by Foucauld in his dictionary (Lhote 1950d, p. 525 f., Fig. 18). This does not seem to be correct, for the word *éfekil* (pl. *ifekilen*), according to Foucauld, is used synonymously with *émerked* (pl. *imerkeden*) (Foucauld 1951–52, I, p. 313).

Lhote writes that the sandals worn by the Tuareg can be divided into three main types, namely the *ératim*, (or *takalmi*), the *émerked*, and the *éfekil*, and that these three types correspond to different types of environment, namely desert, mountain, and steppe (Lhote 1950d, p. 528 f.). Perhaps one should substitute the word *éfekil* with *tagliezez*. There seems to be a certain correspondance between footwear and environment, but it should be added that the distribution of sandal types cannot be explained solely by reference to natural conditions. The *ératim* (or *takalmi*) type of sandal, for example, is used throughout Tuareg country from the Sudan to the central and northern parts of the Sahara, an extremely large area comprising great environmental differences. Nor are they suited to all types of desert. They quickly wear out when used on stony ground, and it is very tiring to wear them when walking through deep sand as the broad soles do not bear upon the surface. The *émerked* type of sandal is doubtless the best for walking in mountains, for it is fixed firmly to the foot and its sole of

7:Nicolaisen E-5 (1951-1962) 1963 MS25 Tuareg MS25

291



[439] Fig. 244. Sandals known to the Ayr Tuareg as *akeroga*. Bought at Agadez, said to be manufactured at Sokoto in Nigeria. Similar sandals were very common among the *Kel Ataram* Tuareg I saw near Ayoru on the Niger. Dimension: ca. 0.29 m. (N.M. G. 6641).

291 tanned skin does not so easily slide upon the rocks. But sandals of this type are used by a great many
182 Tuareg who do not live in proper mountain areas. The distribution of cultural traits can rarely be explained by mere reference to environmental factors.

292 A most interesting type of footwear, known to the Northern Tuareg and to those of Ayr, is a kind of skin-stocking which is worn with sandals in the winter. I have never myself seen it among the Tuareg and though it has been described in literature published prior to my investigations I failed to enquire
[119] about its use and manufacture. The fact that I have not seen Tuareg skin-stockings does not prove that they are rarely used, for while I have stayed among the Tuareg throughout five summer seasons I have only been among them for one winter, when I mainly lived in the lower parts of the Ahaggar Massif. Most Tuareg I met that winter went barefooted or wore sandals, and those who wanted an extra protection against the cold wore various types of European footwear and stockings.

7:Nicolaisen E-5 (1951-1962) 1963 MS25 Tuareg MS25

1952, pl. II, 4; Desplagnes 1907, pl. CVI p. 396). Various pastoralists within the huge area of Tibesti, Borku, and Ennedi also use barrel-vaulted mat-covered tents. These are very different from Tuareg mat tents (cf. Biassuti 1933, Fig. 2, p. 173; Despois 1946, pl. XXII; Le Coeur 1937, p. 39 & 1950, p. 192, pl. XXVI, 99; Schiffers 1957, pl. IV; Kronenberg 1959, pl. III; Fuchs 1961, p. 18 ff., pl. IV). However, a mat tent described in detail by Chapelle has a structure which includes pronged sticks and horizontal bars (Chapelle 1957, p. 227 ff.), and a Tebu tent from Bilma now in the IFAN Museum at Niamey resembles the mat-covered Ayr tent in having two horizontal cross-bars at the narrow sides – each bar resting upon seven vertical pronged sticks.

We presume that Tuareg mat tents constitute a very ancient and traditional type of dwelling, which, perhaps, was originally covered with mats of grass-stems (cf. p. 350 f.). We venture to advance this theory, the more so as other types of Tuareg tents less elaborate in their structures show very close affinities with the arched mat tent. Our theory, however, gives rise to one important question:— Is the elaborate structure of Tuareg mat tents well fitted to pastoral life?

It is evident that some of the Tuareg, who live in mat tents, and notably the *Bélla*, are semi-nomads, and Capot-Rey says that "– – les populations qui l'ont adoptée ne se deplacent presque plus; – –" (Capot-Rey 1953a, p. 222). This is not correct. Mat tents like that described in B.I.a. are used by true nomads, who move much during the rainy season to find the best annual pasture for their domestic animals. At that season many pastoralists move their camps of barrel-vaulted tents about once a week, and though some of them prefer to erect their tents according to the simple *tafala* method (cf. B.I.f., p. 356), most nomads will erect the tent in the ordinary fashion. It may be added that even the *Kel Geres* who come to Southern Ayr at the end of the rains have with them their mat tents which they erect correctly. There are, it is true, many Tuareg possessing mat tents who remain almost on the same spot throughout the year, but this is equally true of many Tuareg with skin tents. The mat tent is a true pastoral dwelling type. It is not very difficult to put up though it takes more time than does the erection of most skin tents. It is also not very difficult to transport the comparatively elaborate structure of normal mat tents. With few exceptions the pastoral *Kel Ayr* who live in and around the Massif use donkeys for tent transportation. The light tent mats are simply used as a kind of pack-saddle, being rolled up and placed over the back and along both sides of the pack-animal. The curved boughs and rods which form arches and semi-arches, and the comparatively few vertical sticks with the two cross-bars are tied up into parcels which are fastened over the mats at the animal's sides. I have frequently seen a tent, together with the very heavy wooden bed (*tédabut*) and various domestic utensils, being transported by two donkeys, and a normal tent can be transported by a single donkey without much difficulty. As a further indication of this I produce a photograph showing the movement of a camp comprising three ordinary tents, three wooden beds, and the necessary household implements and provisions, and it will be seen that all this is transported by six donkeys (cf. Fig. 266). On the whole, an ordinary mat tent is neither very difficult to erect, nor difficult to transport. It is more difficult to erect the mat tent than the skin tent, but skin tents very often constitute a heavier burden. The sheet of skin, or more correctly leather, is heavier than the covering of mats, and though it is true of many skin tents that they have a less elaborate structure than the mat tents, the former need a system of pegs and poles to fasten the sheet, and these have to be transported except where

7:Nicolaisen E-5 (1951-1962) 1963 MS25 Tuareg MS25

suitable natural boughs are abundant. There are advantages and disadvantages in mat tents as well as in skin tents. During the very hot season the mat tent is by far the best type of dwelling; it is comparatively high and the mat covering is not heated to any great extent by the sun. During the rainy season the mat tent is less practical than the skin tent. Rain may fall so heavily and abundantly that it penetrates the mat covering, and even if it does not it will be necessary to remove all mats after a heavy shower in order to dry them in the sun. The skin tent is normally erected quicker than the mat tent, it protects efficiently against rain, but is, on the other hand, most unpleasant during the hot season. It does not seem possible to explain the distribution of mat tents and skin tents on purely geographical grounds, but it seems as though the mat tent is used mainly where dum palm leaves for plaiting are available. Where the dum palm disappears, the mat tent tends to disappear also, though mat tents, as we have seen, may be provided with a covering of *éwerwer* type (p. 350 f.). Outside of the dum palm area most Tuareg have skin tents for portable dwellings. Within the dum palm area mat tents and skin tents are mixed in certain regions, and it has been seen that certain Tuareg use mat tents during the very hot season before the rains, but adopt skin tents when the rains start. This seem to indicate clearly the advantage and the disadvantage of the two dwelling types. But the advantages of both dwellings can be obtained in another way, namely by placing a sheet of skin over the top of the mat tent in the rainy season. This is actually done by many Tuareg. I was told that the *Kel Faday* Tuareg around Ingal very frequently cover their mat tents with skin during the rainy season, and remove the skin again when the rains are over. It is perhaps this to which Rodd refers in a brief note on Tuareg tents in Ayr (Rodd 1926a, p. 212), and we may be sure that the usage is a very ancient one in these regions, for it is mentioned already by Ibn Batutah in reference to the *Bardamah*, who are stated to be nomads that frequently move their camps (cf. Ibn Batutah IV, p. 437). The custom of covering mat tents with a sheet of skin has also been noted in the case of the *Iwllemmeden* Tuareg by Barth (Barth 1857–58, I, p. 597 f.). It is very possible that it is still more widely known in Southern Tuareg groups, as it allows in an easy way the advantages of both types of dwellings.

B.2. *Skin Tents.*

Skin tents are used by Tuareg in all groups, though there is some doubt as to the use of skin tents among the *Kel Geres*. I have myself previously stated that they have skin tents (Nicolaisen 1959, p. 118), this statement being based on information gathered in Ayr 1955. Lhote also mention that some *Kel Geres* use skin tents, while other pastoralists in this group own mat-covered tents (cf. Lhote 1947a, p. 79, phot. 51 p. 80–81). But when I visited the camp of the *Kel Geres* drum-chief in 1959 he claimed that the *Kel Geres* always live in mat tents. As to the *Kel Ayr*, skin tents are very rare among them. In all other Tuareg groups skin tents play a very important role. They constitute so to speak the only kind of portable dwellings among the Northern Tuareg and the *Kel Adrar*, and they form the most common type of tent also in the two groups of *Iwllemmeden* Tuareg. Zeltner says that the dividing line between skin tents and mat tents in Southern Tuareg country follows the Paris Meridian (Zeltner 1914a, p. 364), but there is in fact no true dividing line between these dwelling types, which are sometimes used by the same people at different seasons, and the two tent types are sometimes combined into one, as mat tents may be covered with skin throughout the rainy season.

7:Nicolaisen E-5 (1951-1962) 1963 MS25 Tuareg MS25

In literature there are tent descriptions which I have omitted in my survey of Tuareg tent structures, partly because the descriptions are unclear, and partly because they clearly indicate tents which are not erected according to any definite method (cf. Demoulin 1928, p. 159; Campbell 1928, p. 205; Bernard quoted by Laoust 1930, p. 225).

Finally, I add that the sheet of skin is very commonly used for a kind of wind-screen among the Tuareg. Such wind-screens are of two types:— (1) The sheet is attached to three or four sticks buried in the ground. A wind-screen of this kind is depicted in Fig. 284a. It serves as a temporary shelter for visitors in a camp. (2) The sheet is supported by three or four sticks placed in one row with a long stick resting horizontally in their prongs. Such wind-screens are seen in Figs. 284 b-c. They are used by the members of a household in ordinary camps, and it is quite common to erect tents in this manner during seasons when rainfall is not expected. Indeed, many Ahaggar Tuareg use their skin tents only for a part of the year, for skin tents are not too well adapted to the burning hot desert climate. If possible, many Tuareg prefer to live in the shade of rocks and trees, and if efficient shade of this type is found the skin tents are generally not erected. But the Tuareg will then erect part of the wooden structure, namely the forked sticks carrying cross-bars, as these elements serve not only as supports of the sheet, but also for the suspension of skin bags and various domestic implements (cf. Fig. 106).

Capot-Rey writes that the Tuareg skin tents are also less waterproof than mat tents (Capot-Rey 1953a, p. 225), but this is not correct. During the rains, as we have seen, skin tents are preferred by many Tuareg who at other seasons live in mat tents, and we have also seen that many Ayr Tuareg will then cover their mat tents with skin. If skin tents were not well fitted for rain they would indeed be very badly adapted also to the Sudanese zone where they are widely found among the Tuareg.

There can be little doubt that the use of skin sheets is very old, for all over the world we find them used for portable dwellings among people at primitive subsistence levels. It is also substantiated by Feilberg that we have throughout the Near and Middle Easts isolated occurrences of skin tents, and that these seem to have been more common in these regions in the past. Feilberg mentions in particular the use of skin for tents among the Tuareg and among the Sluba of Central Arabia (cf. Feilberg 1944, p. 144). When Feilberg wrote his book on tent development in the Near and Middle East, a description of the structure of Sluba tents was not available. But later investigations have intimated that some skin tents of the Sluba do not seem to be structurally related to ordinary Tuareg skin tents, but rather constitute a kind of wind-screen (cf. Lundbæk 1962). I have mentioned above that the Ahaggar Tuareg also use their tent skins as wind-screens, but it is evident that structurally the normal skin tents in all Tuareg groups have nothing to do with wind-screens.

It is possible that the use of skin for wind-screens is extremely old among the Tuareg, but there seem to be some evidence that plaited grass mats for covering the true tents are older. We have seen that among Tuareg who use mat tents (the *Kel Ayr* and the *Kel Geres*), the inner layer of mats covering the dome-shaped top consists of *éwerwer* mats made of plant stems tied together, and it has also been mentioned that certain arched tents among the *Kel Dennek* and the Sudanese *Bélla* are covered exclusively with mats produced on this principle. According to Duveyrier mats of straw were formerly used for tent covering among the Northern Tuareg, and it is possible that the *afezu* mats, which seem to constitute the walls of all Tuareg skin tents, may be considered a survival from tents

7:Nicolaisen E-5 (1951-1962) 1963 MS25 Tuareg MS25

*342 178 582

while to my knowledge they have never married women of the *Iwillemmeden*. Marriages seem to be of great importance for the diffusion of cultural traits among the Tuareg.

*342 174 182

It is clear that the use of T-shaped posts is not limited to particular environmental zones, for T-shaped posts are characteristic of certain Tuareg skin tents both in the true desert country and in southern regions of plains and savannahs. Furthermore, it seems as if this structure is found mainly among the Northern Tuareg, the *Kel Adrar*, and among the *Kel Dennek*, while outside these regions T-shaped posts are rare. Thus if we cannot explain the use and the distribution of T-shaped posts in skin tents from an analysis of environment, we may perhaps ascribe its present distribution to historical events.

*342 174

The most important characteristic of T-shaped posts is that they are not buried in the ground like all other poles and posts of Tuareg portable dwellings. They rest upon the surface, and if they sometimes penetrate two or three centimetres into the soil this is not to keep them upright but to prevent them from sliding. The fact that Tuareg T-shaped posts are not buried in the ground makes it unlikely that they are related to the T-shaped posts of permanent dwellings like those used in huts and houses of North Africa, and I believe that originally they came from a barrel-vaulted dwelling which had one of its arches supported by a post resting upon the surface. That an evolution of this kind is in fact possible is shown by Ferdinand's description of certain black tents among the Duranni nomads of Afghanistan. The middle arch of these tents is made from pieces of curved poles, namely two long pieces lashed to a shorter top piece, which is supported by a central post resting upon the surface of the ground. This is the normal structure of Duranni tents, but in summer and in spring nomads frequently content themselves with the erection of the middle part of the arch supported by the central post resting upon the surface. In other words, the Duranni nomads at certain seasons change their barrel-vaulted dwelling into a dwelling supported by T-shaped posts at a right angle to the longitudinal direction (cf. Ferdinand 1959, Fig. 7 p. 35). I think that this development is also perhaps responsible for the evolution of T-shaped tents among the Tuareg, but I do not believe that it took place among them. We have among the Tuareg no portable barrel-vaulted dwellings of arches supported by central posts. We find this principle in certain barrel-vaulted dwellings used among the *Kel Ewey* farmers of Ayr (cf. p. 347 ff.), but this barrel-vaulted hut originated from the Tuareg mat tent, which among the sedentary *Kel Ewey* adopted certain traits of the bee-hive hut.

*342 174 177

I think there is little doubt that a relationship exists between T-shaped posts of Tuareg skin tents and similar posts of North African black tents. This relationship was first suggested by Feilberg in his thesis on the black tent (cf. Feilberg 1944, p. 143), and I believe that it can be proved that such a relationship actually exists.

[184]

Black tents are not generally used by the Tuareg. In the extreme north of the *Kel Ajjer* territory a few Tuareg have adopted it owing to contact with Arab pastoralists. It is possible that there are also Tuareg with black tents in the extreme south-west of Tuareg country around Timbuktu. There are black tents in this region (Jackson 1820, p. 23; Barth 1857-58, IV, p. 474 ff.), and it seems as if some Tuareg there occasionally live in them (cf. Delafosse 1912, I, p. 334). It is clear that the black tent is found within a large semi-circular belt enclosing Tuareg country from the Fezzan via Northern Sahara and the Atlas through Mauretania to Timbuktu (cf. Feilberg 1944, map II). It is also clear that there